

Message Text

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70

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 ARA-16 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 COA-02 DLOS-06 NIC-01 OMB-01

ACDA-19 EA-11 AID-20 EB-11 TRSE-00 CU-04 IO-14 DRC-01

/227 W

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R 251703Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7927

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

INFO AMCONSUL DOUALA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 599

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, CM, EK, CU, SP, UR

SUBJ: CUBAN AND SOVIET PRESENCE IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA

REF: YAOUNDE 241

1. SUMMARY. SPANISH MFA HAS INFORMED EMBASSY OF ITS GROWING CONCERN WITH RAPID EXPANISON OF CUBAN PRESENCE IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA WHICH IT FEARS IS MERELY A CONVENIENT COVER FOR PROMOTING SOVIET INTERESTS. SPANISH RELATIONS WITH GOEG DECLINING STEADILY, BUT MFA DOES NOT BELIEVE MACIAS IS YET READY TO CUT ALL TIES OR TO COMPROMISE NEWLY-WON IMDEPENDENCE WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES.

2. MFA DIRECTOR FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS SOUTH OF SAHARA,
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PROVIDED FOLLOWING INFORMATION JANUARY 24

WITH RESPECT TO REPORTS OF GROWING CUBAN PRESENCE IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA (REFTEL).

(A) MACIAS HIMSELF TOOK INITIATIVE IN MID-1973 TO SEND HIS MINISTER OF INTERIOR TO CUBA. HAVANA RECIPROCATED SOON AFTER WITH VISIT OF SIX-MAN DELEGATION TO EQUATORIAL GUINEA. FIRST CONTINGENT OF 90 CUBAN ADVISERS ARRIVED IN EARLY FALL 1973 PRIOR TO ESTABLISHMENT OF CUBAN EMBASSY. THIS GROUP INCLUDED SOME DOCTORS (WHOM FRAGA DESCRIBED AS IN REALITY ONLY MEDICAL CORPSMEN), AGRICULTURAL TECHNICIANS, AND A LARGE NUMBER OF "POLITICAL ACTIVISTS." OTHER TEAMS OF "TECHNICIANS" HAVE ARRIVED AT MALABO (SANTA ISABEL) SINCE OPENING OF CUBAN EMBASSY. MFA BELIEVED CUBANS, WITH ADVANTAGE OF LANGUAGE AND "ANTI-COLONIAL" IDEOLOGY, HAD IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO GOEG AND PRESENTED POTENT THREAT TO SPANISH PRESENCE. MFA OFFICIAL SHOWED EMBASSY OFFICER TEXT OF MACIAS' SPEECH IN MID-JANUARY TO "PEOPLE'S NATIONAL ASSEMBLY" SET UP UNDER NEW CONSTITUTION AND SAID, ALTHOUGH IDEAS WERE MACIAS', FORMULATION OF POLITICAL THEMES AND SPANISH STYLE REVEALED HAND OF CUBAN ADVISER.

(B) MFA BELIEVED UPSURGE IN CUBAN ACTIVITY WAS SCREEN BEHIND WHICH SOVIETS INTENDED TO BUILD UP THEIR OWN INFLUENCE. USSR HAS ALREADY ACCEPTED NUMBER OF EQUATORIAL GUINEANS FOR STUDY IN USSR. SOVIET FISHING FLEET OPERATED CONTINUOUSLY IN NEIGHBORING WATERS. MACIAS FORCED ONLY SPANISH FISHING COMPANY IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA, PESCANOVA, TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH SOVIETS ON PURCHASE OF SOVIET FISHING CATCH THROUGH "AFRIPESCA" OR ELSE FACE EXPROPRIATION. MFA, WHILE CONSCIOUS OF THIS TREND OF GROWING SOVIET INFLUENCE, DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT MACIAS WOULD GO SO FAR TO ALLOW SOVIETS TO SET UP A BASE OF ANY TYPE FOR FEAR OF COMPROMISING EQUATORIAL GUINEA'S OWN NEWLY-WON INDEPENDENCE. SECONDLY, PEOPLE REPORTEDLY HAVE TRADITIONAL ATTACHMENT TO PRIVATE PROPERTY AND WOULD NOT WANT TO ENDANGER IT.

(C) CHINESE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT CUBAN-SOVIET ACTIVITIES, AND MFA BELIEVED THAT CHICOM INVOLVMENT IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA, OWING TO LANGUAGE PROBLEM, HAD PROVEN DISAPPOINTING TO THEM. CHINESE HAVE BEEN LARGEST AID DONORS UP TO PRESENT (APART FROM SPAIN ITSELF).

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3. BILATERAL RELATIONS ARE ON DECLINE. SPAIN STILL CONTINUES TO SUPPORT CURRENCY (PESETA) OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA, TO SUPPLY AND PAY FOR TEACHING STAFF IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, TO PROVIDE ONLY EXTERNAL AIR (IBERIA) AND MARITIME COMMUNICATION TO EUROPE. GOEG, HOWEVER, DISCONTINUED SCHOLARSHIPS TO SPAIN IN 1970 AND SINCE THEN THERE HAVE BEEN NO STUDENTS FROM EQUATORIAL GUINEA IN SPAIN. THOSE WHO WERE HERE EARLIER HAVE OPTED TO REMAIN

IN SPAIN. GOEG ALSO INTENDS TO TAKE OVER MARITIME
COMMUNICATION WITH RECENTLY DELIVERED CHINESE VELLEL
BETWEEN MAINLAND AND ISLANDS AS WELL AS BETWEEN
FERNANDAO POO AND NIGERIA FOR TRANSPORT OF NIGERIAN
BRACEROS. ALTHOUGH MACIAS WAS LISTENING TO COMMUNIST
ADVISERS AND GRADUALLY INTRODUCING TERMINOLOGY AND
SYMBOLS USUALLY ASSOCIATED WITH "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACIES",
MFA DID NOT BELIEVE THAT HE WOULD LET TIES WITH SPAIN
DETERIORATE ENTIRELY. MEANWHILE, MFA WAS FOLLOWING,
DEVELOPMENTS CLOSELY.
RIVERO

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